

6. Providing Opportunities for Outdoor Recreation

The proposed Project supports an existing community, outdoor recreation initiative. As mentioned in Five Valleys' cover letter (See Pg. 2), the Lincoln Community River Park proposal is a community grassroots project that began more than 3-years ago with local residents gathering to discuss opportunities for a public park along the Blackfoot River. These local residents asked Five Valleys, Prickly Pear and others to help evaluate and explore their options with them. Years of outreach, collaboration and negotiations have culminated in this opportunity for the Lincoln Community River Park—a community park along the Blackfoot River within walking distance of the Lincoln town center and several neighborhoods—owned by Five Valleys Land Trust and managed as a public park in conjunction with community members and other partners (See letter of support, 10-14).

The proposed Lincoln Community River Park would provide many different, low-impact outdoor recreational opportunities for the public by enhancing access to the Blackfoot River and the Property itself. These opportunities include but are not limited to fishing, swimming, wildlife viewing, and picnicking. Paul Roos currently permits informal public access to the parcel. Under this proposal Five Valleys, would commit to maintaining the parcel's open space values and operating the parcel as a public park. If Five Valleys transfers ownership in the future, Five Valleys would transfer ownership with restrictions in place that would maintain the open space values of the Property and would allow for public access.

As described in the Draft Lincoln Community River Park Interim Management Plan, the overall goal for recreational use on the Property is to provide public access in a manner that fits with community interests and needs, while also protecting the Property's ecological resources (See 10-13). Five Valleys, Prickly Pear, community partners, and volunteers will work together to plan for and install necessary recreation-related infrastructure, including a parking area and pedestrian trail to access the Property and the Blackfoot River. In addition, we will explore opportunities to create a trail that is accessible for people with physical limitations. We will need to secure additional funding outside of the scope of this fee acquisition proposal to develop trail and other recreation-related infrastructure on the Property, and since the Property is located within the 100-year floodplain and a flood hazard zone, we will work with Lewis and Clark County on the appropriate permitting analysis and requirements.

7. Protecting Water Resources and Water Quality

The 9.5 acre Property has high water resource and water quality values because of its connectivity to the Blackfoot River and the high percentage of the Property that lies within the 100-year floodplain—the parcel includes 1,056 feet of Blackfoot River frontage with 81% located within the 100-year floodplain and the remaining acreage in a Special Flood Hazard Zone. The Property contains intact riparian vegetation associated with the river and an expansive gravel bar along the Blackfoot River, but some areas along the riverbank are eroding and compromising the integrity of the riparian habitat. As mentioned, future opportunities exist for Five Valleys and Prickly Pear to work with other partners and the community to help improve these areas.

The Property also includes 2.6 acre of wetland habitat as identified in the National Wetlands Survey data layer. There is a small, man-made pond on the Property as well, that is speculated to be the result of historic gravel and sand extraction (See photo, 10-9). This pond is not identified

within the National Wetlands Survey. The Montana Department of Environmental Quality classifies the Blackfoot River as a B-1 stream, meaning the river should be maintained for activities such as drinking and municipal uses, swimming and recreation, growth and propagation of trout and associated aquatic life, and as an agricultural and industrial water supply (Montana Statewide Fisheries Management Plan, 2013). The Blackfoot River in this area tends to go dry in late summer, with the water primarily flowing underground and resurfacing further downstream. Nonetheless, there are pools that hold water and fish.

There are no water rights appurtenant to the Property, and the Property is not located within a watershed that is the source of a public water supply system. In addition, the Property is not located in an area that has been identified by a government entity as being at risk to the aquifer in terms of the geology and soils of the area.

Montana Statewide Fisheries Management Plan, 2013-2018. 2013. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, 1420 East Sixth Avenue, Helena, MT. 479 pp.

8. Preserving Open Lands, Natural Areas and Historic Values

The Property is located within walking distance of the town of Lincoln and is easily viewed and accessed from Stemple Pass Road, a county maintained road (See Aerial Map, Pg. 11). With this Proposal, the Property would remain open space, providing scenic views of natural areas from Stemple Pass Road and the Blackfoot River. The Project also would help conserve the ecological values of the Property along the Blackfoot River, an internationally known waterbody that is strongly associated with the county's and community's identity and sense of place. Completion of this Project would help implement a community vision of a public park on the Blackfoot River that provides family-friendly access and low-impact recreational opportunities.

The Montana Natural Heritage Program identified 3 threatened and endangered species within the township and range of the Property, including bull trout, grizzly bear and Canada lynx. Habitat characteristics of the Property and other species that utilize or may the Property are described in more detail above in 5) Protecting Habitat for Fish and Wildlife. Native habitats on the Property include healthy stands of aspen and cottonwoods, and other riparian plant communities (See photos, 10-9).

There are no known historic, archeological or prehistoric sites located on the Property.

9. Other Outstanding/Unique Feature(s) of the Property

The Property would provide a natural laboratory for outdoor educational and research opportunities for local school children and adults. Five Valleys' staff already has begun outreach and site visits with teachers from the Lincoln schools and other partners to conduct summer field classes on the Property.

In addition, the proposed Park is a great platform for extensive collaboration and coordination among community members, public agencies, and non-profit partners. In turn, this would result in shared resources and a sense of ownership of the Park for those involved.

The project also complements other great, relatively recent additions to the community, such as the Sculpture in the Wild. Overall, the addition of the Lincoln Community River Park would help improve the quality of life for community members and visitors (See Letter of Support, 10-14).

10. Required Supporting Documentation

Please refer to pages 10-12 for the required maps and the attached electronic file named, Lincoln_Park_Due_Diligence_FiveValleysLandTrust.pdf for the additional supporting documents.

Lincoln Community River Park—Fee Acquisition Proposal

I/we have prepared this application to the best of our ability and knowledge and request that Lewis and Clark County evaluate this request for funding based on the information contained herein. I/we understand the project selection process described in the Lewis and Clark Open Lands Program Guide. I/we understand that a recommendation that this project move to the Due Diligence Phase is not a guarantee of funding. If any information or circumstance changes substantially the project may be subject to reconsideration or reapplication, as described in the Program Guide.

I am authorized to sign this application as the applicant/landowner or a representative of the Sponsor.

Vickie Edwards

6/21/16.

Primary sponsor representative signature
Vickie Edwards, Conservation Project Manager

Date

10. Required Supporting Documentation

Please refer to the attached document, [Lincoln_Park_Due_Diligence_FiveValleysLandTrust.pdf](#), for additional supporting documentation.

10.8: Supplementary Maps





